

**Security Message to U.S. Citizens
U.S. Embassy Belmopan, Belize**

August 7, 2012

Hurricane Warning for Belize: Tropical Storm Ernesto

This Message is to alert U.S. citizens residing and traveling in Belize that Tropical Storm Ernesto has been upgraded to a category 1 hurricane, and to alert U.S. citizens to the potential dangers posed by the storm.

A hurricane warning is in effect for Belize.

The National Hurricane Center reports that Hurricane Ernesto is located near latitude 18.5 North, longitude 85.5 West, approximately 250 miles east of Belize City. Ernesto is moving toward the west-northwest at nearly 14 mph (22 km/h). Maximum sustained winds are 80 mph or 130 km/h. The Belize National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) continues voluntary evacuation through Tuesday, August 7, 2012, from San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, as well as Caye Caulker. Please monitor Belize media reports for the latest updates on future evacuations.

Peace Corps volunteers in northern Belize and the Belize City District are being evacuated inland to Belmopan. Peace Corps volunteers in southern Belize are being evacuated north to Punta Gorda.

U.S. citizens are urged to locate shelter, monitor media reports, and follow all official instructions. U.S. citizens should carry their travel documents at all times (i.e. U.S. passport, birth certificate, picture ID's, etc.) or secure them in safe, waterproof locations. We also suggest that U.S. citizens contact friends and family in the United States with updates about their whereabouts.

For continued updates on Hurricane Ernesto, residents and travelers are advised to monitor the storm at www.nhc.noaa.gov or www.nemo.org.bz.

Additional media reports may be found at Channel 5 News Belize (<http://www.channel5belize.com/>), Channel 7 News Belize (<http://www.7newsbelize.com/>), and the Belize Tourism Industry Association, <http://btia.org/>.

U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to enroll in our Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register in person with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy to contact them in case of emergency.

For emergencies involving American citizens in Belize, please contact the U.S. Embassy Belmopan. The U.S. Embassy is located in Belmopan City on Floral Park Road, telephone from the United States: 011-501-822-4011; telephone from within Belize: 501-822-4011 or after

working hours at either 501-610-5030. You may also contact the Embassy's Consular Section by e-mail at: ACSBelize@state.gov. The Embassy's Internet address is <http://belize.usembassy.gov/>.